

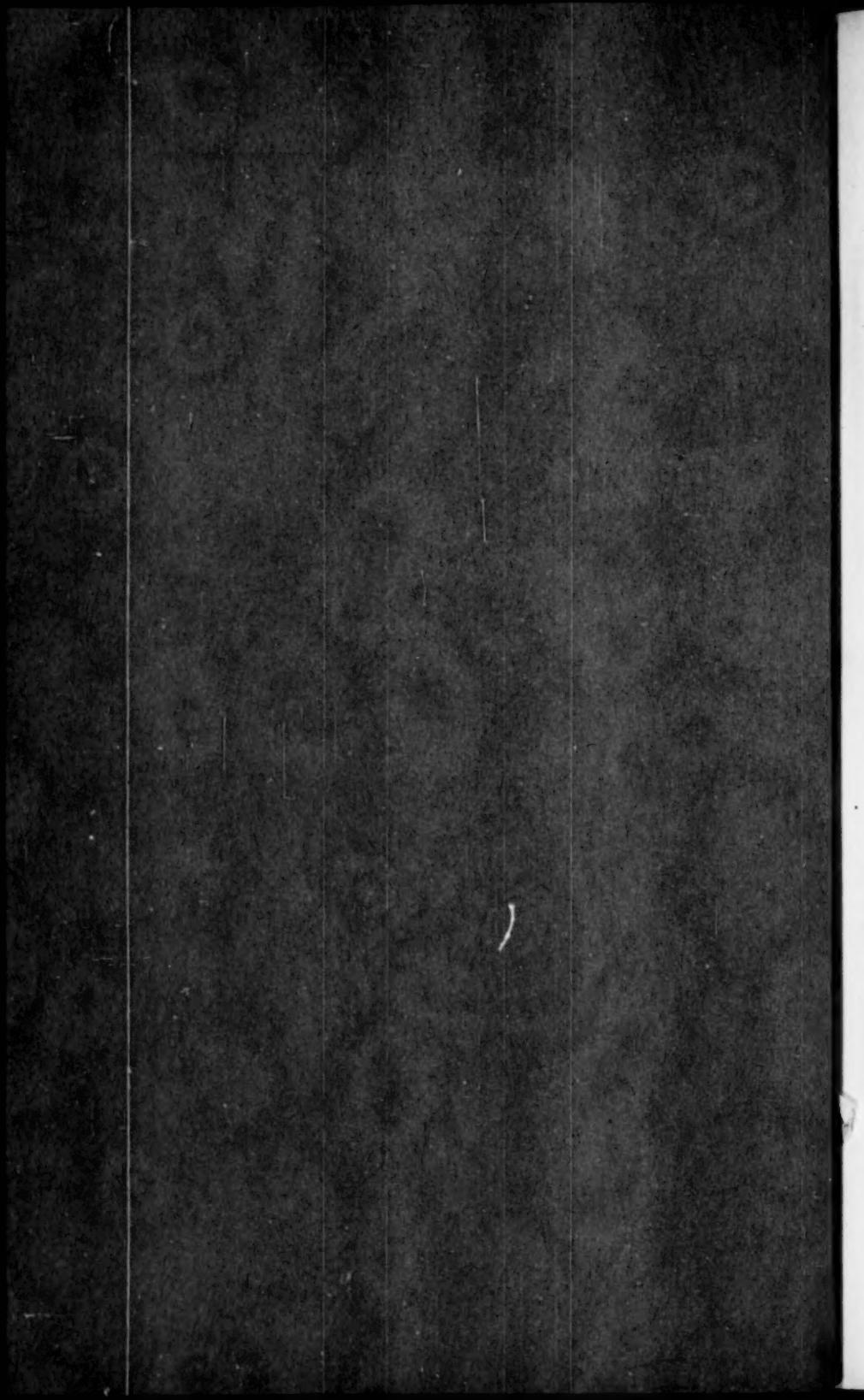
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THE APPERCEPTION OF ATTITUDES

Responses to "The Lonely Ones" of William Steig

Weston La Barre

In all their daily behavior, whether intended or "accidental," people are constantly exhibiting or betraying their inner attitude stances. Threatened by this fact, many would prefer to join an official conspiracy of silence to the effect that *some* human behavior is indeterminate and meaningless, and that a rigorous and unrelentingly analytic view "goes too far," i. e. arouses anxiety when it encroaches upon the areas wherein it has been culturally agreed that the Emperor is wearing beautiful clothes. But the fact that we know far better than we officially pretend to believe, is shown by our actual phatic (1) understandings of each other.

When one displays behavior which should be recalled for re-editing, the usual extenuation offered is "I didn't mean it that way," thus underscoring the fact evident to all that this was precisely how you did mean it. Likewise, we constantly, and no doubt correctly, read the attitudes of the other fellow, the unenthusiastic handshake, the overperfunctory gesture. We need these masks precisely to the extent that our emotional stupidity and dishonesty hide from us the uselessness and impossibility of such disguises. But one excellent way of unmistakably eliciting this unacknowledged insight people have is to confront them with the "caricature" of behavior, the emotionally indifferent and ethically denatured world of the cartoon. By implicitly agreeing that here in this dehumanized world (of course it is not) everything is all in fun and that we don't really mean it, humanity can be caught off guard and freed to exercise emotional apperception and projection.

For example, here are a few cartoons which have appeared in mass circulation magazines of the last few years:

- a) In a pleasant suburban home father is reading the evening paper while pajama-ed small son is stalking him from behind the chair with a toy gun; mother calls cheerfully from the doorway, "Come along to bed, dear, you can disintegrate Daddy some other time."
- b) In a lower-middle-class bedroom a man is standing on a pile of books on a chair, about to insert his head in a loop tied to the chandelier; a plump smiling Boy Scout has just opened the door and says, "Hey, Pop, that's not a hangman's knot."
- c) In a lower-class kitchen father is placidly reading the morning paper at breakfast; a small boy next to him is standing on the chair about to swing a hatchet and cleave the man's skull from nave to chaps; mother, a coffee-cup half to her mouth, says perfunctorily, "No, no, Junior, remember Papa's the meal ticket."
- d) In a nondescript room a man is trussed up in string and laid across a toy railroad track, while a child watches with satisfaction that approach of the toy train.
- e) A young couple, entering their boy's room, are disconcerted to find that Junior has built a giant guillotine with his Erecto set.

Now it is evident that "enjoyment" of these cartoons *must* involve the readers' unwitting insight into and apperception of the situation, i. e. a boy's earnest participation in the demise of his father, and their laughter indicates both the presence of anxiety and its liquidation. Nevertheless, a great majority of the sound, level-headed readers who have themselves enjoyed the cartoon will solemnly agree that the concept of an Oedipus complex is "too Freudian" (perhaps no man's very name has been so used as a simple pejorative as his who insistently told humanity these unwelcome truths).

Of cartoon books in recent years none to the writer's knowledge has been more useful in teaching these matters

to clinical psychologists than a volume by William Steig entitled "The Lonely Ones." I do not know Mr. Steig's formal instruction in psychopathology and psychiatry. It is probably a narcissism of the academic to suppose automatically that he must have had some: actually it is enough that he be the preternaturally keen observer of human behavior that he is. In imaginative drawings, with great economy of line, Mr. Steig has pictured the tonuses and displayed the attitude-stances of a large gamut of psychiatric types. (2) For a proper appreciation of Mr. Steig's achievement, it is indispensable to have a copy of his drawings before one, in reading the comments of clinical students below. Each cartoon illustrates a *cliche*, which alone (save for the sample description of the first cartoon) is quoted, for Mr. Steig's drawings are inimitably (3) his own.

(Cartoon) A headless figure with one support of a triple-wired radio antenna arising from where the neck should be; two eyes flank the base of it, and the other support of the antenna appears to be stuck in the small of the back. The arms hang straight down, thumbs to seams; the feet are at right angles to each other, the heel of the forward (left) foot at the instep of the other. The tunic has ten buttons down the front, and trousers indicate that the figure is male. The whole figure leans slightly to its right, as if listening.

(Caption) *I do what is expected of me.*

(Comments):

No cortex or Ego; in tune with the Divine Voice of Demos.

Passive hanging arms. Ready to walk in The Way, whatever the direction.

Cerea flexibilitas of catatonia: cognition and emotion are split off from the motor activities.

Post-hypnotic suggestibility.

He short-circuits the cortex and the ego.

"But I have my feet on the ground."

The puppet, controlled by wires.

A paranoid who gets his orders from outside, from an Unseen Power.

He does no thinking of his own, hence he couldn't possibly be to blame: he projects, and does not accept responsibility for his own psychic life.

God speaks: the man who hears voices is hearing his own disavowed conscience; but in meg-alomania the voice of God and of the Self are the same.

I obey Authority like a witless and innocent child.

A Yes-man.

I am the Messiah, listening to the Voice of God. He wears what looks like a sleeping-unit.

The over-protected infant identifies completely with the authority of the parents and earns love by renouneing individuality.

Catatonic *cerea flexibilitas* in the feet.

Receiver for the schizophrenic influencing machine.

Candidate for electro-shock therapy.

While the writer does not necessarily agree to all the interpretations, it is clear that many of the comments are made with wit and perception. If an absolute content of meaning for each cartoon were assumed and represented by a horizontal line, then "insight" and "projection" are inverse reciprocal variables of each other: the more of the one, the less of the other.

Insight	Projection
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Insight	Projection
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However, the cartoons are so abstract, so little programmatic that an absolute content of meaning may not easily be assumed. Nor, short of a complete analysis of Mr. Steig's own associations, can any such absolute be determined (for the cartoons are *his* creations, and they must mean what he *meant* them to mean). So far as consistencies of interpretation are

concerned, however, one of my graduate students, Miss Frances Gowans, made a tabulated check. The titles of the cartoons were placed on the left-hand margin of the tables, and the names of thirty-four students at the top margin, to make vertical columns for each. The responses were then identified in terms of the classical Kraepelinian categories wherever possible and tabulated. Read horizontally, therefore, the results indicate the consistency of diagnosis as between person and person. For example, "Very few understand my works," in 11 out of 11 identifiable responses was a "paranoid" diagnosis; 17 out of 17 "who are all those others" as "schizophrenic"; 11 out of 11 "Convention be damned" as "manic" and so on, though some cartoons showed a poverty of identifiable results, or inconsistent diagnoses by different students. The favorite cartoon, "People are no damned good" showed interesting results: 18 "depressive" and 18 "schizophrenic" which argues against an "absolute" content of meaning, and raises the interesting question of the possibility of multiple psychiatric dimensions in personality, simultaneously, and an unsurprising "overdetermination" in the cartoons. When the table is read vertically, one can examine the possibility of interpretations persistently preferred by the given student, which were "out of step" with other students', a measure of individual "projection." On the whole, however, this was quite unexpectedly absent, each student being able to make psychiatrically-different interpretations instead of just one; moreover, since different student had a high order of agreement among themselves on a given cartoon, there was something of a consensus as to what a cartoon "meant," psychiatrically. This seems to indicate that there is genuine phatic communication between cartoonist and students: the cartoonist had identifiable intentions, successfully "read" by the majority of students. Indeed, there was higher consistency of understanding of content than is often observed in the staff conferences of senior neuropsychiatrists on patients, perhaps understandably. These results forced the experimenter drastically to revise initial expectancies. These materials have little value as a pro-

jective technique, like the Rorschach, since they are too pre-determined. While it is true that Steig's drawings are not "programmatic" in the sense of highly situational cartoons which admit of only one interpretation (e. g. Dean's "Nostalgia," showing a bearded old man sitting and looking at a string of frankfurters, each enclosing a nude woman, stretching over to the horizon and the setting sun), nevertheless, people "see" what, in terms of consensus, is "there" in the Steig cartoons. Instead of communicating anything about themselves, as in a Rorschach, students "understood" what Steig was "saying"—which is alike a tribute to the genius of the cartoonist in phatic communication, and to the insight (now without quotation marks) of the students. The experimenter is left with the shambles of a once-promising "projective technique." (4) The wisdom that remains with Pandora's empty box is this: people understand what people mean, even in disguised and highly symbolical forms, and even when (in some contexts) everybody is busy pretending that they *don't* understand, or is strenuously joining in the pretense that there is no meaning, there is no basis for understanding, and anyone who maintains this is a Freudian (meaning quite clear) so-and-so. It should surprise no psychiatrist when correctly understanding what a psychotic says to be told that what he says is "crazy."

I do not give in to myself (5)

Set ideas (head in a vice [sic]), compulsive's mouth
and jaw-set.

The synthetic backbone of the compulsive.

The shield and buckler of the uncertain (not very
strong legs).

The obsessive "idée fixe"; the creature of iron-bound
protective habit.

His prison is his support (the turtle's carapace im-
prisons, but it also protects and supports).

The corset of convention.

The brace keeps me from looking around: I might see

something that would weaken me.

I will see only what I want to see, and thus stay on
my straight and narrow path (as I define it).

Conscience-corsetted character.

The type of person who uses idealism as a defense
mechanism.

The thing to remember is that he has put these re-
straints on himself.

The tense lips determined not to be oral-indulgent.
I follow my head, not my heart.

The chin is up—by mechanical aids (he ought to be
equipped with bootstraps to lift himself with).

He “leads with his chin.”

Why pretend?

Hebephrenia.

The “breech-presentation” to life.

The worshipful dog, obedient to His Master’s Voice.

His posture indicates that he feels others look down
on him.

I’m just an underdog: people walk over me; nobody
loves me; why should I pretend to be human and
act as they do; I might as well accept the “facts.”

I’m no good and everybody knows it, so why pretend.

I am not capable, I am not big enough. I tried—oh
yes I tried—but I failed. Don’t punish me for it!

A man who has been a gay dog, expecting to be a
whipped cur.

The stripes of a coward? He wears his colors as a
defence.

I’m a dog: I’m just honest, that’s all.

The Sinner, grovelling before God.

He wants to be loved for his weaknesses (as a child)
not for his strengths (as a man).

I'm at one with the universe

This narcissistic spermatozoon isn't even a zygote yet:
the ovum is there but he passes it by in narcissistic self-content.

The autistic stream of consciousness of the schizoid monad.

The Oneness with the All-ness of the Schizophrenic.
"I'm just drifting along in a dream" (a wet dream,
for all the object-love evidenced).

Really an attempt to *escape* from the universe of reality, by over-simplifying its stubborn, vexing detailedness and complexity.

The disembodied intellectual, all Brain, trailing an indefinitely attached and secondary body. Egoistic: my brain and the world are of equal importance. Schopenhauer: "The World is my Idea."

Floating in the clouds of his belief in his uniqueness and superiority.

A manie, getting Away from It All.

Manie euphoria; if his superego were present maybe he wouldn't be so smugly sure that he is absolutely in step with the universe.

Viscerotonia of pure enjoyment and bliss.

A honeymoon in the hand.

Nothing escapes my notice

Old maid voyeur of life.

The rug motif is another eye.

The fine detail in the rug suggests an excessive attention to environment.

The prim balance of the compulsive who has set *her* life in order, anyway.

Righteousness enjoying other people's mistakes.

The Eye of God.

This old tabby watches everything like a cat—but

also has a cat's sudden, dissimulated aggressiveness and readiness to scratch.

Vicarious living, by seeing, not doing.

Sees all, knows all—phantasies of omniscience.

She is carefully clad, covered, concealed.

Mrs. God.

I'm no good

"Mood swings."

"My feet are tied" (hell, your hands aren't).

A depressive does not stand on his own two feet.

The sympathy-eliciting of the phony suicide.

The rope represents an outside controlling force—the parental condemning superego, or mother's apron string?

His postural tonus indicates an unquestioning acceptance of the right of the superego to "hold him up" and swing him around.

I quit: I'm just the passive pendulum of time, the worn-out garter slipping down the leg of fate, just a rolling collar-button under life's great bureau.

Nobody loves me, everybody hates me, guess I'll go eat worms.

A *dependent* person.

Very few understand my works

"Misunderstood".

He holds a super-special double-barrelled phallus, but withholdingly to his chest (is his double "pretty" breasts?—identified with Mamma?)

The Greenwich Village failure. The local Bard.

"Born before his time".

By rights I should be the Cynosure of all eyes; I am the Only One.

Head-feathers as spectacular as a comet's tail, but
comets don't stay around long.

This man is practically a statue to himself.

The paranoid pedant sitting on his own little summit
with his metaphysical wand of knowledge.

A person so different from others—*a rara avis*—and
so superior in his conception of himself that he
belittles others in their incapacity to understand
him, when in reality he is the one out of touch
and the one who misunderstands.

The only child faces the outside world and doesn't
like it one bit; oh for the automatic and uncon-
ditional love of Mother!

The Uranian, the urning, who flits above the common
herd.

The Creative Spirit—the Logos of the Universe—God.
It is not that my paranoid system is delusional; no,
it is the rest of the world which is out of step
with me.

His posture shows the narcissistic pride in itself of
the erect penis (phallic overvaluation of one-
self).

He doesn't *want* his works to be understood; they
might then be seen to be not so hot. He protects
himself against failure by pedantry.

Intellectual royalty with his throne and scepter.

“Very few” may be an over-estimate; this conces-
sion must be made lest it be suspected that no-
body *can* or *would* appreciate his works, except
himself.

“Himself” (Irish folk-method of referring to the Big
Cheese).

A mollusk who dwelt in primordial slime
Was always himself to his innermost core,
But, as being himself took up all of his time,
He never was anything more.

Still, just as he was, though long ages have flown,
He stands on my specimen-cabinet shelf:

A fossil, immortal in durable stone,
A monument raised to himself.

I mind my own business

Madly rushing around sticking *his* nose into others' business: gossip and busy-body (hat—going visiting).

Psychomotor excitement of the manie in his feet, an automatism untroubled by either Superego demands or an aware Ego's concern for others (he may run over someone with those closed eyes).

Nose: exaggerated self-esteem.

Eye does not see evil, no mouth to speak of it—but he has ears to hear!

In the Navy they call gossip "seuttlebutt."

Wheels (6) get into ruts.

The Paragon who feels his way along the conventional paths on which the Machine Age drives him.

Just a blind cog in the great Wheel of Creation.

"The little wheel moves by faith, the big wheel moves by the grace of God".

He doesn't see anything he doesn't want to.

I am too self-centered to be interested in other people;
I rationalize this into a virtue.

This busy-body goes in *vicious* circles—from one gossip to another.

My true love will come some day

The romanticist.

Circus-exhibitionism of megalomaniae narcissism, far above the vulgar crowd.

The Passive Princess: some day some man will share my admiration of myself.

The young woman who assumes a flighty trapeze air about her social situation: Madame Bovary as a young girl.

The passive, narcissistic person who waits for another person to make the first move.

Defense mechanism, against *her* inability to love a man *now*.

Flight into fantasy: she leaves the mundane earth where she might run into a real if imperfect man; she lifts herself up into the ideal world of autistic thinking where she runs no such danger.

She may be uppity, but she has her eye on the Main Chance.

I'm just hanging around for What Turns Up.

"I'm nobody's baby, I wonder why" (popular song).

"All things come to him who waits." (However, "God helps those who help themselves").

The Sloth also hangs upside down.

I hold myself so high in my estimation that only Prince Charming himself (the son of the King) can claim me.

"Father loved me but he died".

Daddy's tomboy.

Female in the phallic-narcissistic stage: the body as a phallus, she flies through the air with the greatest of ease.

I think before I act

Touching wood; waiting till the Spirit moves him?

Dogmatic mouth.

The chain and pendant of especial worth; the chosen one, the anointed.

The bump of awareness no-one else has.

The person who is bound by logic: A equals B, B equals C, therefore A equals C. And though leaning at an angle—"slightly off"—has a strong

support to lean on. The Logic centers in the head, of course.

Compulsion neurosis in a perfectionist who cannot bear to make a mistake.

I was hurt once before (bump on head)—never again!

A person who is afraid of his own decisions—he dimly perceives some phony rationalization in it somewhere, hence he has to hesitate and protect himself from his ambivalences with all the machinery of ratiocination.

I stop and figure out all the angles.

Everything in the world applies to the paranoiac; the center of the Universe passes right through him axially.

The Anal Erotic: the Omnipotence of Thought.

I am blameless

The lower lip of pouting, self-justified, moral rectitude.

"I wasn't doing anything, just sitting here picking my nose and peddling my papers when . . ."

Big nose, displacement upward from the place where my hands are.

The large, hooknosed gentleman who is persecuted because he is always right.

Adam in the Garden of Eden, before Eve, and before the Serpent raised its ugly head.

He is blameless because he lacks the stamina to do anything for which he could be blamed.

Buddha under the Bo Tree.

Why are you hitting your genitals then? Adam, is the Evil One, the Snake, to blame, not you?

I "nose" everything.

He may be blameless, but he's covering up something.

Bellyache from the apple *Eve* gave him.

He has washed his hands of guilt and has folded them complacently to sit under the protective tree of

his defense mechanisms.
“My hands are tied”.

It pays to conform

Security bought by conformity; it “got him in the end”.
“Bends over backwards” to be correct.
Wooden soldier; a stuffed shirt, stuffed with sawdust like Charley McCarthy.
The pride of the deformed pouter pigeon bred to conformity with the ridiculous—but ornamented with the turkey gobbler’s proud tuft.
The conformist who is all bent out of shape.
He sets himself on a pedestal.
No matter how uncomfortable it is, to get along one must conform at least to the dictates of the mob.
He has no backbone of his own.
He is *stuck* at an infantile exhibitionistic, passive stage of development and narcissistically proud of it.
My complete library consists of Emily Post, Noah Webster, Joe Miller, Hoyle, and the Holy Bible.
A Man of Distinction.
The location of the stick suggests the world’s reward for such conformity.
Conformity gives a snail-like pace to progress.
Eyes closed to any new idea.
Impaled on the horn of *no* dilemma.
He wears his fetish like a badge.
High man on the totem pole.
General Pomposity Q. Chicken.
One must go faster than the Snail of Culture, but pretend to be borne along with the wave.
The goody-goody who as a child was put on a pedestal and is now stuck there.
A soldier of the Right.

A certain Presidential candidate (I can think of at least two).

Convention be dammed!

Manie, sticking out his tongue at the pursuing super-ego.

The antic head-piece of the insane.

The alcoholic, nudist, party boy who has mounted his manic horse and "gone off" in all directions.

The uninhibited man has cast off the moral tonuses which organize a body: if a puppet on strings is the compulsive slave of the manipulating super-ego, *this man is surely "unstrung"*.

Igmpu. (Old Marine saying)

One way to get attention, in a child, is to be naughty. Also sprach Zarathustra: the superior man is above conventions.

That streak down his back is yellow.

His backbone (superego) is pretty wavering and vacillating.

Where are you, Jocasta? Laius is dead!

His only conflict is about which impulse to obey at the moment.

The breech presentation to life in another version: fooyey on you and a couple of cocked snoots.

Who are all those others?

Narcissistic stagefright that invites and shuns attention.

Shy woodland deer, with *three* cerebrotonic ears, overly responsive to stimuli: thinskinned to sensory perceptions.

Holds on to tree with baby hands; it will not give him much shelter!

The cerebrotonic soul.

Bobby Burns' "Mouse"—or a bunny.

The Wallflower on looking into a roomful of strangers, clings to his one acquaintance, casting furtive

glances about, acutely aware of public opinion.
What are they looking at me like that for? Is something the matter with me? One would think I had rabbit's ears!

Percival, on his first day at school, makes the alarming discovery that there are other children in the world.

The little deer has jackass ears.

Guilt over masturbation.

I want my mamma.

Two ears are usually enough to catch society's reactions.

This one's mine.

Mother loved me but she died

Still busy being a good little girl: may have worked with Mamma, but is inappropriate and out-of-date with men in a grown woman.

The protective umbrella is closed, but it will protect her from the male rain.

The bared teeth are hostile—will she poke that umbrella at any one who approaches?

"Virtue is its *only* reward".

The rationalizing old maid who is so homely that only her mother *could* love her, holding her phallie symbol and symbol of perfection, the umbrella—she almost leans on it.

The woman who pretends she has a penis shouldn't expect men to pursue her.

Mother was like an open umbrella protecting me from the world; now that is all closed. I'm not prepared to face the weather. I will cling to the memory of my mother (who was both breast and penis: the umbrella: father and mother to me).

Damn Mother for leaving me!

The Lonely One.

Lost goods, unclaimed.

Her Protector (mother equals umbrella equals, also, male) is all folded up; she leans on it though.
Been better if she'd had a Daddy to love her too.

Whoever wants the answer must come to me

His real eyes are closed, but he sees with the "eyes of the mind": autistic thinking.

Ratiocination equals rationalization.

The paranoid astrologist and His System (whose system is it, his or God's? or are God and he the same thing?)

The indoor thinker.

An anal erotie: tightly folded arms, concealing clothes, he clings to an answer not freely given, his chart has the tortuosity of the trail of the *merde*.

The paranoid megalomaniac standing before the door (he hopes) has no key.

No ears: you can't tell me a thing.

Revenge is sweet

The hostile (oral-biting) prayer: "O Lord, confound Thy enemies!"

Not too hard on himself: kneeling on a pillow.

Persecution has brought him to his knees—but he really doesn't suffer much from it.

Self-righteousness gritting its teeth.

Blue in the face with passive glee that misfortune has overtaken an enemy.

The sadomasochist whose main life dimension is pain suffered and inflicted.

An orgasm of hatred.

A man constipated with hostility.

Swelled head; no ears to hear of any criticism of himself.

He really enjoys being mistreated, because this then justifies the release of his hostilities upon people.

I have my own troubles

A strong man beats a drum: the hypochondriac has double eyes for his own woes.
The overbearing bore who loves to hear himself talk—about his own unique troubles.
OK, bub, my heart bleeds for you; now what?
This guy has a permanent pass to the Chaplain.
Beating his gums.
Not that he can't take care of them. Just hear how he took care of . . .
He has baby-rattles in both hands (lollipops).
The person who, when you ask how he is, tells you.

I do not give up hope.

Maybe the egg will hatch; but *she* isn't going to do anything about it.
Catatonic passivity; hebephrenic regression.
"Mourning and melancholia": all wrapped up in herself.
She is like the seed which hopes to develop; the unfertilized Egg; the *virgo intacta*; sterility waiting for the menopause.
If she thinks she is the Madonna, she may have to wait quite a long time for God to descend.
This is "My true love will come some day"—thirty years later.
The amoeba has drawn in all pseudopodia, too wounded by reality.
Voyeur passivity.
The World's Oyster.
Mourning Becomes Electra.

My trouble is purely organic

The somatotonic *has* no psychic dimension: that's crossed out.

It is *real, here*, not in my mind (for that I would be responsible).

"Conversion hysteria".

The Trauma of Birth.

Where's that cortical ego?

But he looks as robust as a Neanderthal man.

A well-nourished body in a man who indulges himself and his body, and places few disciplines on it.

The physical monist: the brain is nothing, the body all. The pseudo-hardboiled thinker, before the psychosomaticist has got hold of him.

The organic trouble is inherited, as you can see from my navel.

Actually he is a paint in the neck—of the doctor.

Hitch my bleeding navel back up to momma and I'll be all right.

The evil eye is on my stomach; organ-cathexis.

My mind is a total blank; my hands are big, and practiced in giving "organ recitals" of my ills.

My trouble . . . I can't help it.

Stomach ulcer in a psychosomatic case.

These ailments are purely psychic

Hyperthyroid activity, a manie who will soon be burnt out by exhaustion.

The biting orality of the manie.

Cerebrotonic receptivity, "a bundle of [proprioceptive] nerves".

His psyche is only tenuously attached to his pelvic region.

"Be glad you're neurotic".

Rationalization must take some sudden, bizarre turns —some of his outlines look like the Communist party line.

Relief is through talking; but this man has a wide-open, shouting mouth.

Insanity as a defense-mechanism in law.
A bundle of nerves in a perpetual "startle reflex".
I've got nerves that jingle-jangle-jingle.
Orally-aggressive hypochondriac.
"Haywire".
It's all in my mind; there's nothing wrong with *me*.
Some day he'll burn out that connection.

I can laugh at myself

The self-panner who knocks himself out at his own jokes, which are reflections of himself and help him exhibitionistically to keep the limelight:
Fred Allen, Edgar Bergen, Jack Benny, Bob Hope.

Laughter as a defense mechanism against sober seeing what one is and taking self-responsibility seriously.

He's not really *looking* at himself; he is looking hopefully for the response this masochistic spectacle will elicit.

Spinelessness doting on its own weakness.

His "insight" is a defense mechanism.

Eva Tanguay throwing herself around singing "I don't care".

I can be Objective about myself; I Know Myself Pretty Well.

The joke's on me, heh, heh.

He jumps the gun on others' anticipated criticisms of him; but is laughter enough to change the situation?

He looks a little unhappy in his somewhat forced laughter.

Depressive masochism of Pagliacci.

Life has him over a barrel and is "tickling" him.

The depressive ego attempting by a *tour de force* to identify itself with a sadistic superego.

Kick me, kick me again.
Laughing—instead of being the least constructive about the situation.
It is typical of manies to think everything they say or do is funny; they thoroughly “enjoy” themselves.
He falls flat on his face, because his own view of himself has none of the dignity of a grown man to keep him upright.

All I ask is to be left alone

Mourning and melancholia; in love with Death (leaning upon the tombstone).
Anorexia nervosa.
The hat represents the last attempt at social contact.
The depressive: “It’s all too enormous, it’s all too difficult”.
I tried to be sociable, with my hat; it’s no use.
The position of the hands suggests that men and heterosexuality are too much for her; but she still wears her hat: is she really sincere?
I’ve buried my hope here and I want to mourn at its grave.
The Death Wish.
Electra at Daddy’s grave.
Daddy loved me but he died.
“For my heart belongs to Daddy”.

Public opinion no longer worries me

This silly manic, with overly-facile self-approval on her face, thinks she has stripped off all social demands with her clothes.
The seductive peek-a-boo would be more seductive if it were more subtle.
She holds to the phallus and casts off the clothes of

convention (the superego); she is what the layman imagines Freud to be advocating, that is, she uses a mucker's version of Freud to rationalize her id-dictated, superego-undisciplined sexuality. If she went to a psychoanalyst, he'd probably tell her what she needed was *more* inhibitions.

If public opinion *really* doesn't affect you, why the silly, self-conscious grin of naughtiness?

An Individualist! (Looks to me like any other naked woman).

The psychopath.

Having a male status position to stand behind, she can mock at those who have not.

Who dat say who dar?

I do not forget to be angry

"All tied up in knots".

As much tension as a rubber-ribbon wound golfball, but he doesn't look much like he had a core of honey.

He has no mouth to express his aggressions: "asthmatic personality".

He has his hands tied by his foresight.

Taffy can be pulled and stretched almost indefinitely, and yet remain stuck on itself.

A mummy embalmed in the juices of his own venom, enwrapped in his own hostilities.

"Culture-bound".

The chrysalis that never will become a butterfly, from remembering the past.

My emotions are in a strait-jacket.

All balled up with aggression.

I never touch myself or make mud pies.

Selfwound red tape.

Speechless with impotent rage.

The dot on the forehead is the Hindu sign of marriage: the hen-pecked husband who is forbidden to breathe.

Meditation will reveal all secrets

Gandhi in the lotus pose; the park-bench-sitter watching life pass him by.

The high-domed *a prioristic* philosopher or metaphysician; the Tender-Minded man.

The one who is trying to concentrate on the 4 dots is continually distracted in his mind, his hands, his feet.

The Four-Square Thinker: the Epistemologist.

The abstract world is the only real one, the material aspect is an unimportant illusion: the idealist philosopher.

“As we become more philosophical we regress to our infantile ignorance of things and of differences” (Edward Sapir).

“There are more things in heaven and earth
Than are dreamed of in your philosophy, Horatio”.
He would rather sit down and speculate about problems than do anything about them.

Just checking to see if these Four Gospels are correct.

Bernard Baruch on a park bench.

An Extra-Sensory Perception man with his dice.

The omnipotence of thought.

The Objective Psychologist: everything can be reduced to mathematics.

I have nothing to give

I'd give all, if I could. So sorry (with a broad smile).
The professional holy mendicant, the happy irresponsible.

The man who tells another, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," willing for the other man to have the blessing if he can have the thing: the oral-dependent personality.

Nothing to give but Myself, that is; which is, as you see, eminently desireable.

"Take me, why don't you take me?"

The empty hands show *he* isn't worth very much either.

The member of a group who, with a silly grin, enjoys group activity but contributes nothing to it.

I can never give, so obviously I must always receive. Mr. A-B Bloodgroup: the "universal recipient".

His hands and mouth are large as if experienced in taking if not giving.

I got plenty of nothin'.

Tapeworm, about to go hungry.

As a matter of fact, there's nothing under this loin-cloth either.

I can't give you anything but love.

This woman has no breasts.

Glamour is only in the spectator's eye

The cold objective eye of science has no use for emotion or feeling.

Well-equipped with probing and penetrating tools!

OK, then, why are you so very interested in looking, and hearing, and probing?

But there is glamour in being a doctor (shown by his histrionic "bed-side manner").

A schizothyme who has more insight into things than into people; the surgical mentality which sees people only as things.

You can't see or hear or touch values and emotions with the scientists' methods and the surgeon's scalpel: therefore they do not exist.

I have no silly emotions like you common people (poor saps!) have; I react only to Facts.

The athletosome who can see only with his muscles and his tools.

He looks on life with his eyes firmly shut on some aspects of it.

Analytic rather than synthetic, a schizothyme who reacts only in terms of body parts, the dismembering, castrative surgical mind; for him the whole is not more than the sum of all its parts, he could not react to a beautiful woman as a whole. Compulsive-schizothymic concentration upon details and blocking of emotion.

A man who protects himself from the complexities of the emotional side of life by pretending that it doesn't exist.

The "pseudo-hardboiled" person, who conveniently ignores the psychological realities his is unable to cope with.

Beauty is only skin deep.

The prefrontal lobotomist.

The man with the mechanical heart.

You'll have to take me as I am

This individual is *phylogenetically infantile*.

His physical abnormalities are part of an unreal picture of himself.

This Triceratops backbone-armor is a *weapon*.

A polyorchidite, and not secretly (soap-box) proud of it—and a ribbon-decorated tail too. He isn't really as ashamed of his uncouth genitalia as he pretends to be.

This man will tolerate no back-slapping.

Stance: he is rooted, must be bid for, will not step down and come halfway.

He loves himself (arms).

His poor, dripping viscera; "I suffer so, and that is why you should forgive my aggressions and my defense-mechanisms".

"I am what I am and it's too bad if you don't like it". This individual has an inferiority feeling and is trying to hide it by being aggressive. But the box and the loud voice merely advertize what he thinks are his differences.

The mentally prehistoric acromegalic Columbus Circle soapbox orator who loves to hear himself talk.

Here I am, showing off all my defects.

I know I'm a stinker, and I'll be damned if I'll change (and you're not so hot either).

A snake, trying to look like a dinosaur.

You'll have to take me—with all the strings attached.
I'm attached to my foibles.

Kinsey's "American male", really quite a skeezix.

His head is the glans of a phallic personality that's him all over.

I can't express it

He wants to be up there with the rest, but this plodding earthbound creature cannot achieve the flight of inspiration.

The voyeur watches another fly but he can't.

He is impotent (in his bodily tonus), he cannot achieve erection and flight.

The gal is "giving him the bird" and passing him by; he holds his hands, though, on mother earth's breast.

A depressive sets his goal too impossibly high (depressive fold in eyelid); he should detach his wagon from the star and hitch it to some more earthly object, realize his limitations and then push.

-
- The depressive watches his ego-(eagle)-ideal give him the go-by.
- The turtle lacks a protective shell; he is vulnerable to defeat: this is the man who *did* "give in to himself," and indulge his phantasies, but was left high and dry.
- The man who clings to the mother's breast lacks the phallie tonus to fly.
- The potent poet (lit. equals "maker" equals penis) expresses himself in action, not in words anyway.
- The baby at the breast is incest-barred from erection and flight.
- The self-depreciation of a man in love "high above him".
- "The wonder of you" (Abner Dean).

I want what's coming to me

This baby on the pot has the gripes.
I take, I keep, I never give.

The second stage of the paranoid process: aggrieved because the world withholds recognition of his megalomaniae claims to be King; the prosecuting world holds out on giving (projection) the love so abundantly due me (erotomania).

The fellow who sits and waits for life to bestow its blessings on him—without working of course.

The world owes me a living; I didn't ask to be born.

The 52-20 Clubber.

Anal retentiveness.

I deserve the worst. I hope I get it. Whatever bad I deserve, I hope they give it to me. I have been very sinful, and I hope that I am punished for my sins. I ought to be dead. The depressive. Sitting on the Judgment Seat.
Petulance on a pot.

If you are good-natured, people step all over you

"You can't win".

No arms to protect himself.

The extra eye sees aggression where it doesn't exist.
The persecutory paranoiae needs a *rear-guard* to protect himself from dagger- and spear-thrusts in the back.

Passive meekness, homosexual trend.

The eye fears to find what it hopes to find : the phobia is the projected and unacknowledged wish.

"I've been reamed".

"The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune".

Sad Sack, the GI Milquetoast.

Self-pity self-crucified.

He even let somebody talk his ears off.

What happened to the heart on his sleeve?

No arms—fears his own aggressions and denies them.
To a thin-skinned person even cutting remarks seem like knives.

The Asthmatic Personality.

The knives may be phallic symbols; there is a homosexual element in his passivity.

A courageous and honest man in a genuine battle would have received his wounds in his front; the fleeing and retreating coward is wounded in the back.

Barbecued on the world's spit.

I recreated myself

Overcompensation for a felt inferiority; the achieved superiority he is certainly exhibiting.

Theodore Roosevelt.

The narcissism of the athlete: his recreation is himself.

Charles Atlas grows a penis as big as his Dad's.

The moustachioed supervirile male, with his many machines (watches) and extra bangles and dangles—is he unconsciously convinced he isn't a man that he has to assert it so vehemently?

Only God is a creator; is a *re*creator God Junior?

If he did a better job than God, does that not imply he is greater than God? This is slightly megalomaniac.

I (re)created *myself*; God is the Only Uncreated One.
Delusions of grandeur.

I owe nothing to any man (father). I've never depended upon anyone and I've had no help from anyone. I have no responsibilities toward the world, for what has it done for me?

The "self-made" man "makes" himself, the self-loved onanist masturbating with his muscles.

The body looks pretty strong; how strong is the spirit?

"A handsome and benevolent skunk, ingratiatingly proud of its stink" (Rebecca West, on James Joyce's Simon Daedalus).

The body beautiful is the personality nauseating.

Many rings, symbols of the *women* he has conquered. It seems to me a little homosexual for a man to love a man's body so much.

When he was being knocked about by his father he was a Socialist, but with muscles he became Mussolini.

A bore, with bleeps.

"I was a 98-lb. weakling" (now I weigh 198).

People are no damn good

The ivory-tower recluse who has a self-conscious superiority over people as a substitute for human relationships with them.

The hermit in his shell—however, he overlooks the fact that he too is not so damn good either.

If he condemns humanity for being human, then he
is tarred with the same brush; the depressive
perfectionist.

This womb is square, and not so comfortable as the
first one, but it'll do.

Schopenhauer.

He is saying his piece quietly enough that no one
will revenge themselves for his calling them
names; the aggression in his projection will do
him no harm.

Diogenes the Cynic comes back to his tub, never hav-
ing found an honest man.

In the doghouse of his own confining conscience.

Let the leader of the cult do the worrying

Certainly *I* am not responsible: I just follow along
approved lines.

Broken smile of oligophrenic bafflement: "Ours not
to reason why, ours but to do or die". The hap-
py little moron.

A weak follower who makes no attempt at original
aggressive thinking; an amiable, insipid soul be-
ing led around by strings.

I'm just one in a long chain of passive, unthinking
conformists.

Figure in a parade—which he doesn't know what is
all about.

The party voter who votes the straight ticket.

Hitler is to blame, not the German people.

Silly, isn't it? What will They think up next?

The responsibility is entirely someone else's; I just
work here.

The junior partner in a *folie à deux*.

I've found another Messiah to take over my parents'
function as an authority figure, and I'll traipse
along like a good little fellow.

- I'm clothed with the protection of the sun, moon and stars.
- Culturally-institutionalized infantilism.
- The oral-dependent "sucker" is the eternal "hanger-on".
- Playing horsie for some cultist crook.
- He doesn't know where he is going, but he's on his way.
- The Worm does *not* turn.
- In his Quest for Certainty this psychological infant has found a powerful paranoid parental substitute and authority-figure.
- The Joiner of men's secret societies who likes passively to be covered (his symbol-laden clothes) by male companionship.
- Lodge Night in a family man: the unconscious homosexual component on its night off. The Odd Fellows are really pretty stereotyped.
- I'm towing the line, even if it's not attached to anything.
- A two-faced guy can be led in any direction.
- Passive male homosexuality—I can be had but *you* take the initiative.
- Tied to his mother's apron-strings.
- Let George do it.
- The guy who went back into the Army.

I want your love but don't deserve it

- (Indeed I *do* deserve it: I'm a pretty special fellow—what specimen outside bird-life has such fancy male wattles as these?)
- How about giving some love on your own hook, Bub? I'm really quite an odd fellow to the eye, but when you get to know me . . .
- Just a clown, but beneath this motley lies a broken heart (Kempf's "melancholie fold" of eyes).

He wants her to tell him he really is as desireable as he thinks he is.

Call me Caliban.

This man will creep into a woman's bed on the pretext that he is a baby.

One hand reaches for love, the other caresses himself. The romantic clown, the lounge-lizard, an untrustworthy Don Juan type who is trying to *get* love but not to give it. Watch him! he is basically cold-blooded and will slither back to his lair in the swamps as soon as he gets what he wants, warmth from another's blood—the leech!

Look here! are you looking for a breast to be loved by passively, or a woman to love with your own active virility? Are you concave or convex? What are you anyway, a sucking baby or a man who's willing to *put out* a little loving himself?

Drug-store cowboy. Hi-ya kid, and I mean kid.

A poor fish who wants to be hooked.

Watery, flaccid, urethral character: conflict of ambition and shame.

A reptile, but hardly a snake.

If he really feels unworthy of love, then he has no right to ask for it.

"I want you, I need you" argument: but how about my needs as a woman to be able to depend upon a strong virile man?

He's got callouses on his knees from propositioning many women to adopt him—kind of an over-sized navel, I think.

You've ruined my life

She has many keys to unlock one's sympathies.

The keys off the *chatelaine* represent the disorganization of her life—but she still holds the power in her hands.

"I've given you the best years of my life. You have ruptured the fabric of my life. You have destroyed my virginity—certainly I have no marital marketability anymore. I've wasted myself on you".

The dress and figure are of slovenly middle-age; the hair-do is of the perennial adolescent.

The ex-Glamor Girl resents becoming a Mom.

You've raped me and now my life is ruined. Only a life of prostitution is open to me now. The sticks symbolize various men's sexual organs and the ring symbolizes her over-developed sexual desires and starvation. She rationalizes this need by blaming another who drove her to it.

A Total Wretch brought to the verge of Nervous Prostitution.

The sewing hoop and needles she carries suggest aggression and penetration: is this the castrative woman who so resents men and the active masculine role that she robs men of their penises?

The Queen of Baroda.

Women always get the dirty end of the stick (the woman who confuses genitality with analinity and wants to reverse the Power).

You have intruded into my hitherto inviolate, pure life. Your penetrating destructive activity is to blame.

She is soon to become a mother, but resents the feminine role.

Why pick on me?

The tear-streaked cheeks of self-pity.

The native dress shows a Rousseauist desire to regress to a primitive state.

The lax, blubbery mouth of the oral-dependent.

I'm not important enough to be punished; why don't you give me a break and go after somebody big?

The self-deprecator: the body-tonus of a depressive.
He exhibits the cute little buttocks of a baby—which
he is.

Over-sensitive, drooping antennae; he can't take it.
Just because I am so helpless and weak, you don't
have to pick on me.

"Everything happens to me".

The oral-dependent, with cannibal trimmings.

His response to aggression is merely a query; he will
not fight back when others criticize.

The man who lives behind the Eight Ball.

"I can't help it if I'm different".

Baby buttocks bared for a beating: the masochist.

He'd miss this act if he thought people stopped
paying aggressive attention to him.

I do not believe in misleading people

The guy who gets down to brass tacks—and then
whams them into somebody.

Japanese *facies*.

He will use force to protect the Truth—which is him-
self.

The dogmatist and the doctrinaire; he certainly fore-
arms himself against opposition!

He knows his own mind, which is the sole repository
of the truth, and he is damned well going to see
that other people recognize it.

The athletic, right-thinking man, who sees only one
truth, his own—but he wears the cuckold's horns
and is thus completely misled himself.

The man who thinks muscles establish truths.

The Right of my strong right arm.

He has plenty of weapons to enforce the Truth and
coerce other people; he must be pretty uncertain
about it and sense that others *can* (although he
says they *may* not) have different opinions from
his.

- The propaganda techniques of the intellectual fascist.
An intellectual bully who pretends that "candor"
gives him the right to be brutally aggressive.
- The strength of body of the somatotonic makes it
unnecessary to develop techniques of getting what
he wants other than that of aggressively taking it.
- An amateur psychoanalyzing his friends.
- He has all the perceptiveness of psychological *nuance*
of a bull moose.
- Teddy Roosevelt and his Big Stick.
- Fake demoeracy and phony liberalism of an arrogant,
doctrinaire professor.
- The anthropologist punishes his society.
- The man who is "brutally frank"; he has tacks, not
taet.

I will review my thought just once more

- His legs are fumbly fingers; is he the "hand-con-
scious" neurasthenic?
- The tide is out; the jellyfish is stranded on the beach.
Trying to put his finger on the Trouble.
- The impossibility of self-analysis.
- The depressive perfectionist must never do anything
wrong: he must check and double-check his tal-
lies and the steps of his logic.
- The introspectionist who never gets away from his
own thoughts—he seems like a baby just discov-
ering its toes, again. Reality does not end with
oneself.
- A man exhausted from his neurotic conflicts and the
obstacles he puts up in himself.
- The Sore Spot is really *in him*.
- His face shows incipient dissociation — compulsive
thought becoming schizophrenic.
- He can't see a tree for the forest.
- A graveyard of good intentions which never bloomed.

Compulsive indecision.
 Even his eyes are ambivalent.
 Impotence, haunted and mocked by the sexuality of
 other men.
 The thermometer that hasn't risen.
 Premature ejaculation.
 The Final Exam.
 Browbeaten by his superego.
 The alcoholie and his forest of past resolutions.
 Excuse me for living, but the graveyard is full.

I know my rights

Belligerent (sword) litigiousness (mark on ground),
 provocative and self-righteous (angel's wings).
 The naked, aching, bleeding heart: the Pity of It All!
 I double-dare you: approach me and *pedicabo et*
 irrumabo with my balled sword.
 The paranoiae first flees, then defends himself, and
 then attacks: this man is at the end-point of the
 second stage.
 Paranoid litigiousness: I'll defend this line if it takes
 all summer. Who dares attack my heterosexuality
 (coital crossed lines) will receive my mas-
 culine (homosexual) thrust.
 The cross and wings suggest that he was the motorist
 who had the right of way.
 He's hiding behind the (plus) idea that he is on the
 right side.
 His is the Sword of Justice already; looks to me like
 he's *impersonating* either the Goddess of Justice
 or the Avenging Angel.

But nature remains unchanged

Innocently nude to the Sun, my Father.
 Rousseau, the Cultural Idiot.

The high-minded virgin who goes from tree to tree
like a silver dollar from man to man, but with
her eyes lifted to the heights and the Light—for
men are base and women virtuous—yet she keeps
her hand on two of them.

Nostalgia for Nature, that womb of the romanticist,
that Eden!

The world of men is disillusioning and nasty; but I
am still God's Little Girl.

Too good for *this* world of civilized people.

In a forest of phalluses, she rationalizes her lack of
discipline by saying it's only natural.

Civilization and Its Discontents.

Come and get me!

Acts aggressively to cover up an inner fear.

Come and get me: homosexual panic: but *he* has the
phallus.

I *want* to be "taken", but I'll sure put up a good
show of fighting.

The paranoiac defends himself from a wholly mythical
attack.

Why all the noise? Maybe he wants to be had. (The
erotomaniae certainly believes very strongly that
someone else wants *him* or compellingly loves
him: oh no, it is not *he* who has any erotic
desires).

At least his cloak covers his rear.

Phallic sadism.

Somebody's goin' to get hurt, and it ain't me.

He protects his "box" with a terrible phallus.

This is one thing they'll never take away from me

Flight from persecution: but they'll never take from
me the pearl of my paranoia (my pretty pro-
tective system).

Castration-anxiety in a mono-orchidite.

The possessive individual whose selfish sense of property makes him think people are closing in on him: the Park Avenue leisure class who expect the revolution tomorrow because they are so exploitative today.

The anal-erotic will not give up his treasure.

"The wicked flee where no man pursueth"—this man has a number.

Nobody can take this idea from me, this pearl of great price.

A nobody flees from Authority, Superego, Culture.

His number is up.

He seems to have oral designs on the pellet, saying that which is introjected cannot be lost.

Virginity.

Flight from an enema.

Forgive me—I'm only human

Oligophrenia as a defense.

The Mueker Pose.

We all make mistakes: please love my gaucherie and awkwardness.

I'm just a simple, innocent country oy—how could anybody expect me to understand these things?

I'm irresponsible—even for myself.

A grown man has gumption and spunk; this little boy's navel is scarcely healed yet.

The buck teeth of Peter Rabbit, but he's no buck nor peter.

But other people are "only human" too, and they've done a damsite more creditable job than you. Actually, worthy humanity should be a pride and a goal, not a defense.

This fellow isn't even a "panty-waister".

Alibi Ike.

The Tender Minded (William James).

The one to blame for all my mistakes is God who made me; in fact, I am one of God's major mistakes.

But I can mystify and terrify

The vested interest of the female in being a Mystery. The Woman *without* the penis; but her penetration is Uncanny.

Humans have an exterior which reveals only half the personality; the hypnotic eye makes interpretation and understanding difficult because the "persona" is a mask.

Mystical Woman who looks right through you; she knows all about you, yet she remains a mystery, showing only a side of herself.

The maid has many facets, like a diamond . . .

The Mystery of Emptiness.

Keep 'em guessing; treat 'em rough and tell 'em nothing.

What's behind that facade? (Just the other half of an ordinary woman).

Woman has nothing exciting in her own life [the penis]. She isn't a success in herself alone [it takes two to make a baby] so she puts on a front of mystery to make people think something is there that really isn't [it is only the empty space, the hollow womb]. It's the best way to attract attention [the penis standing at attention].

The dame with the ESP.

The Door to which there is no Key.

If you'd like to see more it'll cost you money; a prostitute soliciting at the door of her crib.

I can petrify men.

Dragon Lady.

So here's to the girl with the little red shoes,

She drinks your whiskey and guzzles your booze,
She necks with you till you think you'll smother,
And then runs home and sleeps with her mother.

If these are representative examples of the sharpness and quality of insight people have into one another, how *dare* anyone rely upon defensive pretenses about himself? Complacency in persisting in such efforts is merely a measure of the inferiority of insight into oneself. "The demand that we reject illusions about ourselves is the demand that we reject situations in which we have need of illusions." Our only security and hope is insight into our faults, and an earnest effort to change them. Luckily, other people are able to see and are often more than willing to help us to see them.

The End

Durham, N. C.

FOOTNOTES

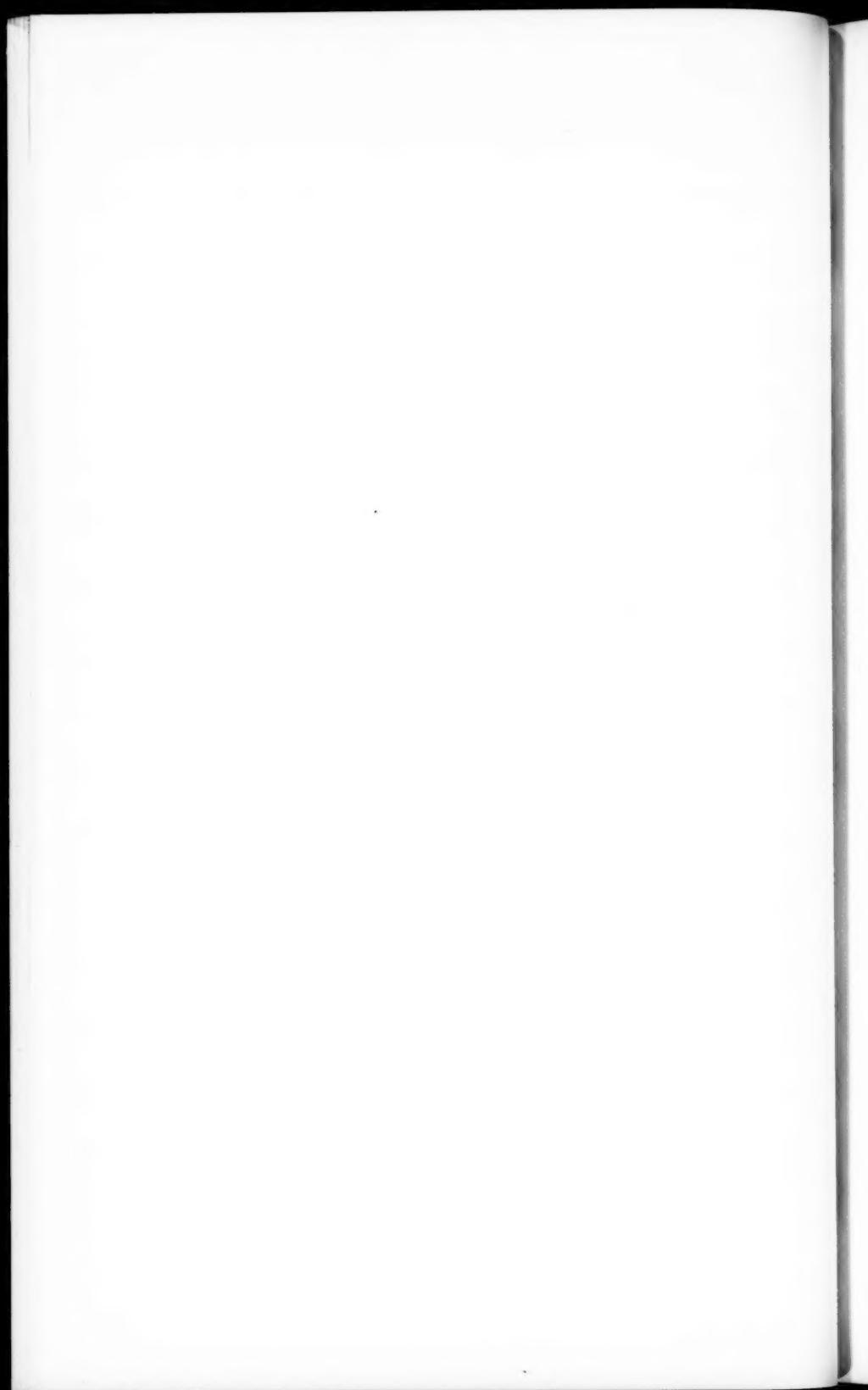
- (1) Most communication is communication of information or opinion concerning external reality, i. e., concerning selective aspects of the structure of the universe. Phatic communication, on the other hand, makes more oblique statements concerning subjective, affective states, emotional tonuses, and attitudinal stances of the speaker. Semantically speaking, a good deal more of our daily linguistic output is phatic than we ordinarily realize, and we also make multiple phatic communications in all manner of non-linguistic manners (see Weston La Barre, "The Cultural Basis of Emotions and Gestures," *Journal of Personality*, 16: 49-68, 1947).
- (2) Cf. La Barre, *The Cultural Basis of Emotions and Gestures*, *Journal of Personality* 1947 16: 49-68, pp. 65, 67-68.
- (3) Even Mr. Steig's own later attempts in this *genre* have been less successful, for he has perhaps too self-consciously tried for effects there than in his superbly spontaneous first production. "It's a Long Way to Heaven" by Abner Dean, the ineffable squalor of George Price's "Who's in Charge Here?" and the wordless *macabres* of Charles Addams

are all excellent in their own way, but much too programmatic for use as a projection technique.

(4) In order to make these materials more properly an unprejudiced "projective technique", the clichés which form the title of the cartoons should undoubtedly be removed, and the cartoons alone presented to the subject to be tested. It is very probable that in the present instance, subjects are reacting to the broad linguistic cues provided by the titles, rather than uncomplicatedly to the cartoons themselves.

(5) It should be understood that in this and the following cartoons not all the responses upon which the tables were based are presented; these are the wholly subjective selections by the writer of those that were "best" in terms of articulateness, though not in terms of his agreement in them.

(6) Campus slang for BMOC (Big Man On Campus).



SWEDENBORG'S PARANOIA.*

by

Edward Hitschmann

Taking for granted that Swedenborg suffered from religious paranoia, all the following facts are explained: a famous scholar and worker in the realm of Natural History, one day, in the fifth decade of his life, he was called by the Lord to interpret to mankind the inner meaning of the Bible. He abandoned Science, resigned his offices, and devoted himself completely to these supernatural phenomena and instructions, and has recorded these revelations extensively in a hundred volumes.

A complete psycho-analytical investigation of Swedenborg has not hitherto been undertaken, may be chiefly owing to the extent of his works, most of which have been translated into German. It is interesting to note that even the short data taken from a book** by a writer not especially interested in psychiatry, present an instructive picture; this can later be completed through more copious data.

I quote, now, passages, almost unchanged, which are significant to a psycho-analyst.

Swedenborg (1688-1772) was the son of a Protestant Bishop, who, as a clever theologian and a man of honest though hot-blooded character, enjoyed unlimited respect. The bishop was said to profess mystical ideas, and to have planted in the boy the seeds of his later mysticotheosophical speculations. The supposition may be right; Swedenborg himself tells a friend his ideas: From his fourth till his tenth year, he was full of thought about God, about the redemption and the spiritual condition of men. He says about himself: "Often

further: "It was my greatest pleasure from my sixth to my
*Translation of an article that appeared in 1913 in *Zentralblat fuer Psychoanalyse*. iii, 1913

**Eugen Sierke, "Schwarmer und Schwindler zu Ende des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts" S. Hirzel, Leipzig 1874

in talking, I revealed things which amazed my parents. They said sometimes, that angels spoke through me!" He says twelfth year to converse with clergymen upon Faith".

It is thus remarkable that the boy did not persist in this direction, but later turned away from theology, and became interested in the exact sciences: mathematics, physics, astronomy and geology. In addition he pursued classical philology. He ended his study of natural history at the University, in 1709, and continued it, during four years' travel. At the age of twenty-six, he was already considered as a polyhistor. The unusually gifted mining assessor published first a natural history repertorium ("Daedalus Hyperboreous"). In addition to German, he mastered French, English, Italian, Hebrew and Greek. In Latin he wrote poems. In 1721-1722, he published many scientific works. In 1718, he became famous by means of a roll-machine which could transport two galleys and five big boats uphill and down hill for the purpose of a siege. In recognition of his "Opera Philosophica et Mineralogica" (1733), he was made a member of The Petersburg Academy of Sciences and the Paris Academy included the work in their Encyclopedia. This work was most comprehensive and profound, especially as regards the metallurgy of copper and iron. and it includes a complete theory of the cosmos proved by mathematical laws.

At the age of forty-six, he was at the zenith of his scientific research and endeavour, but a year before this (1733), his imminent change of development was foreshadowed by his book "Prodromus Philosophi Ratio Cuiantis De Infinito . . .", which disclosed clearly a return to the mystic ideas of his youth; ideas that, till this time, were deep in his mind. Swedenborg turned to the realms of theosophic speculation and from this time forward tried to build up a new religious doctrine. How did the idea, which he himself has told in detail to one of his friends, come? He was staying in London, and intended to sit down to a meal in a common inn, where he had reserved a room. It was late in the evening, and he ate with a great appetite. During

the meal, a kind of mist spread over his eyes, and a lot of monstrous crawling animals appeared on the ground, for example snakes, toads, salamanders and others. In a corner, he saw quite clearly a man sitting surrounded by a shining light, and this man said in a thrilling voice: "Don't eat so much!" The ghost disappeared, and Swedenborg, horrified, hurried to his room. The following night the ghost reappeared, but this time used these words: "I am the Lord Creator and Saviour. I have chosen you to interpret to mankind the inner and spiritual meaning of Holy Writ. I shall dictate what you must write down." The man was dressed in purple, the light around him was very brilliant, but no longer frightening or painful. "In this night," says Swedenborg, "the eyes of my inner nature have been opened, and qualified to look on Heaven, in the realm of spirits, and in Hell. I found everywhere acquaintances who had died, some a long time, some a short time ago: from this day forth, I abandon all secular occupation, to work only for religious purposes, and to accommodate to the orders. It happened often subsequently, that I saw, as in broad daylight, what happened in the next world, and spoke with angels and spirits as with men."

P. T. O.

Swedenborg's behaviour, daily talk and actions, remained entirely normal and unaffected, but he appeared unusual, through asserting that he was able to see spirits, and in solemn seriousness, reporting his visions in the supernatural world. He resigned all his offices (1724), and devoted himself wholly to his mission to proclaim to Christendom the hidden truths of the Gospels. His productivity in the religio-philosophical realm was enormous, his capacity for work amazing; besides his thirteen large printed manuals of theosophical work, he left a hundred (!!) written folio volumes containing gloomy fantasies and mystic visions. His thoughts henceforth, were concerned only with the next world, and the reform of Christian Religion, which was then in a state of complete decadence.

He knew how to live as a man of the world, enjoyed a

satisfactory income and fortune, and lived very comfortably in his small cosy summer house; a sort of temple built at the end of the garden, he devoted to his intercourse with the next world—an angel, he said, dictated to him.

He was practically never ill except when his temptations overcame him, and at such times, he was confined to bed the whole day long, and would not let himself be seen by anyone. Once he complained vehemently of toothache, which he concluded was due to the influence of hell and fighting hypocrites, who tempted him and afflicted him from afar. He recited loudly monologues during the night, and called on bad spirits, who were with him, and allowed them to insult him. Towards feminine visitors, whom he otherwise liked, he behaved suspiciously, especially to the inquisitive, and received them only in the presence of his housekeeper, who was the wife of his gardener. He said "Women are cunning; they pretend that I aspire to closer relationship with them, and, as is well known, they pervert and convert what they hear, and don't understand".

After an experience in his youth, he remained all his life a bachelor. He had been affianced, but his bride deceived him disgracefully, so that he was compelled to renounce her.

Swedenborg owed his European popularity to some wonderful accounts of his gift for telepathy, not to his theologically-mystical works. He enjoyed vigorous health, until old age freshness and mental activity. His habits are described as most simple, and he is said to have lived preferably on milk and coffee, etc., and usually to have avoided meat and wine. In 1771, he had an apoplectic stroke with paralysis of his right side, he lost his ability for inner visions, and his intercourse with spirits ceased suddenly; but shortly before his death, he got this back, and talked again aloud with spirits.

Swedenborg's Heaven consists of three different heavens; each has special societies: the biggest consists of myriads, the next, of some thousands, and the smallest of some hundreds of angels. "I have seen a thousand times," he says, "that all angels have human shapes and are human beings; they are not all spirits without shape, spherical spirits. The

Heaven resembles the Earth in landscape and exterior forms of life (houses, lodgings); banquets, theatrical and musical performances take place. Only the completely innocent are naked. The damned remain in Hell. The quintessence of all mystic and strange fantasies are to be found in Heaven and Hell, by listening and seeing. Passages proving the origin of his works out of a disordered brain, may be found also, and especially, in: "The bliss of wisdom belonging to matrimonial love" and then: "The pleasures of folly belonging to amorous love". This Heaven, copying the earthly heaven, glorifies, above all, human matrimony as celestial and permanent: but in the second part of this pamphlet, amorous love is described in such a rough and denuding manner that one becomes doubtful whether the real purpose was not rather a sensual enjoyment than an intimidation.

When asked why nobody beside himself had such revelations and intercourse with spirits, Swedenborg answered, that everybody could have just the same, as was shown in the Old Testament, but the real hindrance was that people had become too sensual.

A modest attempt at an interpretation of the psychical change in Swedenborg, may be made. It does not pretend to give the deepest and final explanation, nor would it be justified, owing to many missing details of statements.

The external cause of the change is still obscure. The age when it happened is not without significance: it would correspond with a premature climaacteric in man. It appears first by hallucinations, and it is clear that it depends upon a regression to childhood, and to love of his father and the father's religio-mystical influence. "Don't eat so much!" points directly to fatherly admonition—father and father-god are combined, and what the parents, in their time, have wished and uttered—"angels are speaking through him" is founded on fact. The horrible snakes etc. in the first hallucinations, are signs of homosexual feelings. The whole insanity seems to be a fulfilment of infantile narcissistic megalomania: to be a son who surpasses the father, a kind of son of the Lord, a Saviour, a Reformer of Christendom. What

a proud feeling "to be the exclusive object of Divine Wonders". Here also may belong his claim to the power of a prophet.

With Swedenborg, celestial bliss has to be understood as increasing and continuing earthly pleasure.

The disappointment in the deception by his bride, began many years earlier, and was brought about by Swedenborg's erotic peculiarity. This disappointment certainly influenced his behaviour towards women, and alienated him from heterosexuality.

We see a kind of detachment of the sublimated Libido, when Swedenborg renounced his earlier scientific activities, pursued so intensively and successfully. He retired from the connections concerned. A disappointment in this realm may be assumed. The closer explanation of the persecution by bad spirits and devils, can only be conjectured, because particular details are missing. At the end we may point to Freud's important words which for our case also, give us the most valuable insight.*

"****in paranoia the liberated libido becomes fixed on to the ego, and is used for the aggrandizement of the ego. A return is thus made to the stage of narcissism (familiar to us in the development of the libido), in which a person's only sexual object is his own ego. On the basis of this clinical evidence we can suppose that paranoiacs are endowed with a fixation at the stage of narcissism, and we can assert that the amount of regression characteristic of paranoia is indicated by the length of the step back from sublimated homosexuality to narcissism.

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*Freud: Psycho-analytic Notes upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides) C. P. iii p. 459

STORY-TELLERS AND STORY-WRITERS

by

Edmund Bergler, M.D.

Public opinion has it that every story-teller is automatically a story-writer. Frequently, *raconteurs* are accosted by listeners: "You should write that story." There are three specific reasons for denying the identity: two are of practical nature, one is theoretical in scope. The empirical fact is to be recorded that writers suffering from writer's block, do not lose their ability of story-telling when in animated company. To be precise: this applies to those writers who are *also* *reconteurs* in not inhibited periods. It is well known that writers are often shy and reticent, even at times of full productivity.

Thus, story-telling and story-writing seems not to be carved out of the same wood: *not every writer is a raconteur*.

The second practical reason, contradicting the identity of *raconteur* and writer, is another simple empirical fact that *not every raconteur is a writer*. (1) Some *raconteurs* never even think of writing, at least consciously. If they try writing, they fail.

The third—this time theoretical—reason relates to the basic unconscious conflict to be solved in writing and story-telling, respectively. Both types of conflicts are completely different. Writing and story-telling *may* coincide in one and the same person; both are *not* interconnected.

Analysis of *raconteurs* convinced me that they labor under the following repressed conflict: the rejected child (in reality rejected or in his imagination) is not taken seriously; that supercilious attitude of parents is later masochistically elaborated, leading to a secondary exhibitionistic defense—to be at any costs the center of attention, thus spiting the parents. Hence, the combination of verbal and mimetic fiestas is exhibitionistically put in operation—before spectators and

listeners in company. The antics of the raconteurs are parts of his "trade."

The *writer*, on the other hand, labors under a different conflict: he "could not take" the dependence on the giant of the nursery: Mother. He eradicates that lesion in self-esteem in a singular way: he unconsciously denies the narcissistic defeat by negating the mere existence of the "offending" person: Mother. The writer "sets up shop" in an *autarchic* manner: he acts out in his productivity "corrected" giving mother *and* recipient child. That peculiar "unification tendency" is characteristic of the creative person *exclusively*. Whereas every other normal *and* neurotic person unconsciously need *two* people for unconscious re-enactment of allusions to his nursery past, the creative artist requires *one person only*.

Let us assume that a boy has been confronted with a mother who rejects him as a child—truly, or in the child's insatiable fantasy based on insatiable narcissistic demands. If that boy develops normally, he overcomes the real or fancied disappointment by attaching himself as adult to a loving, kind woman. He *corrects* the disappointment from years gone by.

Now assume another boy, confronted with an identical domestic set-up, who unconsciously becomes masochistically attached to the image he creates in his fantasy of the mother. This boy will marry a shrew and be soundly tormented by her. He thus unconsciously *perpetuates* the real or fancied disappointment from "once upon a baby time."

Whether the child in the adult unconsciously corrects or perpetuates the disappointment, he needs *two* people for his private and unconscious theatre: himself and a protagonist.

The creative writer shows, to start with, some similarities with the second boy, as far as his masochistic conflict goes. He elaborates, however, on that conflict differently: he denies the disappointment and masochistic attachment by unconsciously acting out the defense: "Good mother gives (substitute nourishment in form of "beautiful words and

ideas") and I receive the gifts." The strange thing is that "good mother" and recipient child are acted by one person.

Writing is thus a sublimatory selfcure of an alibi-sickness with a happy ending—as long as the temporary selfcure lasts. That selfcure is also remarkable because of an ironic twist: whereas the typical neurotic has to pay doctor's fees for his cure, the artistically creative writer, when successful, even gets paid for his selfcure by publisher and reader. That is one of the many peculiarities of the writing profession.

Comparing the inner conflicts leading to writing and being a raconteur, we observe that the latter's conflicts are much more superficial in the long scale of regression. The raconteur impresses one at first as hysterical show-off, the writer as orally regressed. (2) Since it has been stated previously that some writers are also raconteurs, a contradiction seems patent.

The seeming contradiction resolves itself when we take into consideration the clinical fact that every neurotic tries to rescue himself from the "oral danger" into higher developmental levels. (3) The writer seldom achieves more than a foothold in this desperate flight. The raconteur, however, is more successful in his endeavor.

Another distinguishing mark between writer and raconteur is *deposition and use of scopophilic tendencies*. The writer is an exquisite voyeur ("imagination"), which tendency he transposes into exhibitionism as defense—by writing he exhibits before the reader. The raconteur's exhibitionism serves a different purpose: to compensate for his "shadow existence" in childhood, at which time mother (later, father) did not take cognizance of the child's wanting to be in the limelight. That "limelight", too, is different in writers and raconteurs. The writer exhibits before many people, mostly unknown to him—the anonymous reader. The raconteur exhibits before few people, mostly known to him—he is the "life of the party." Here, a more simple compensation is set in motion, pertaining to being—once in early childhood—excluded from the family "party."

Moreover, the "material" exhibited is different in writers and raconteurs. The writer exhibits the endresult of his inner defenses—the product of *selfcreated* images of his imagination. The raconteur, on the other hand, is mostly a storehouse of funny or witty stories, *created by others*. His "gift" is more that of presentation and repartee.

The reasons accounting for the preponderance of "funny stories" in raconteurs is this: the child tried by being "funny" to attract attention. This attitude is later shifted in raconteurs to a "higher level"—to witty presentation. (4) The sexual connotation of these stories belongs in the pseudo-aggressive "spite-department", directed toward the parents.

The superficial compensatory exhibitionism of the raconteur is frequently connected with the problem of "ugly duckling", to quote a patient. It is remarkable how many raconteurs are, or considered themselves, ugly, homely, unattractive. That bodily defect (real or imaginary, unconsciously always considered as "castration") is intellectually compensated. It is, as if the raconteur would plead: "Don't look at myself as castrated person, concentrate on my words."

Both, the writer and raconteur alike fight their never ending "*battle of the conscience*." (5) Both are defendants indicted before the high tribunal of "the hell within" (Milton). Since the indictment is different, the defensive alibis are different, too.

In *writers* the indictment reads: "You want to be masochistically *refused* by the *pre-oedipal* mother. "The alibi consists first of negation by alleged autarchy and defensive demonstration that one wanted to *get*. Secondarily, the masochistic wish is changed as defense into a pseudo-aggressive alibi—hence the chronic rebellion of the writer and his chronic attack on institution, mores, prejudices.

In *raconteurs*, the indictment reads: "You are masochistically attached to the *oedipal* mother and father—by playing little child pushed into the corner." The defense presented, reads: "Exactly the opposite is true, I want to be

in the limelight." Here, too, exhibitionism is a defense directed against deeper repressed voyeurism. Exactly because the defense was inhibited in childhood by reality factors, the compensatory push is so strong later. Amusingly, the raconteur's exhibitionism is a "moral alibi": the fact that his stories are not made up by himself but others (he just repeats them like an actor), fits into the same pattern: "I'm not guilty." The raconteur peeps at himself through the mirror of his spectators—at his improved and *not* castrated self, that is. (6)

Writer and raconteur represent different clinical entities with different genetic background. The sometimes encountered coincidence of both defensive methods in one and the same person, give the naive observer the impression of inner identity. The latter fallacy overlooks conveniently that real life is less obliging than are chapters in a textbook where different chapters subdivide neatly different clinical entities. The real patient is impertinent enough to mix up and combine different chapters.

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- (1) The linguistic confusion is remarkable: critics frequently refer to writers as "story-tellers." The very same critics who split hairs over precision of language, are in this case guilty of confusion in the use of words.
- (2) For details, see my papers on writers: TALLEYRAND-NAPOLEON-STENDHAL-GRABBE. Intern. Psychoan. Verlag, 1935.—"A Clinical Approach To The Psychoanalysis of Writers" The Psychoan. Rev. 1944.—"On A Three-Layer-Structure In Sublimation" The Psychoan. Quart. 1945.—"The Danger Neurotics Dread Most—Loss Of 'The Basic Fallacy'" The Psychoan. Rev. 1945.—"Further Contribution To The Psychoanalysis Of Writers" I and II. The Psychoan. Rev. 1947 and 1948.—"Psychoanalysis Of Writers And Of Literary Productivity", in PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES (ed. Dr. Roheim) Int. Univ. Press, 1947.—"Samuel Johnson's 'Life Of The Poet Savage'—A Paradigm Of A Type", American Imago 1947.—"John Ruskin's Marital Secret And J. Millais's Painting 'The Order Of Release'", American

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- Imago 1948.—“The Relation Of The Artist To Society”, American Imago 1948.—“This Typewriter To Hire—Psychology Of The Hack-writer”, The Psychiatr. Quart. 1949.—“Writing Block And Unconscious Sources Of Productivity”, in PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES III. (ed. Dr. Roheim). Int. Univ. Press 1949.
- (3) THE BASIC NEUROSES. A Study Of Orality And Psychic Masochism. Grune & Stratton, New York, 1949.
- (4) For connections with logorrhea, see “Logorrhea”, The Psychiatric Quarterly 1944.
- (5) See my book THE BATTLE OF THE CONSCIENCE, Washington Institute of Medicine, 1948.
- (6) For the defensive use of both parts of scopophilia (voyeurism and exhibitionism) see “A New Approach to the Therapy of Erythrophobia”, paper read at the XV Intern. Psychoanalytic Convention, Paris, 1938. Published in The Psychoan. Quarterly 1944.

THE UNCONSCIOUS IDENTIFICATION WORDS-MILK

Arthur Wormhoudt, Ph.D.

Dr. Edmund Bergler has made several important contributions to the psychoanalysis of writers based on his clinical experience. 1) Of the various theories which he has put forward, one concerns the assumption, already hinted at by Freud, that writers are highly narcissistic. Bergler has elaborated this point by describing what he calls the writer's attempt to establish an "autarchic fantasy". This fantasy involves a regression to the oral level, as noted by Brill, and the attempt to exclude the giving mother and her breast by the fantasy that the writer gives himself words-milk. This unconscious identification of words-milk can be documented with literary as well as clinical evidence, and it is to a consideration of some examples of this sort that I wish to devote this paper.

The identification of words-milk, or in its most general significance as the infant probably distinguishes it: sounds-liquid, finds expression in phrases describing the poetic process in almost every poet in the European tradition. Such, for example, are the common idioms "a flood of words", "fluent speech", etc. In poetry more elaborate images frequently depend upon the mythological fact that the Greeks made the Muses goddesses of poetry and the arts who lived on mountains such as Helicon or Parnassus and guarded sacred springs such as Castalia, Aganippe, or Pieria. It was the liquid from these springs which inspired the poets and thus the myth admirably supports the theory that poetry stems from an oral level of the unconscious. The Muses may be taken as pre-genital mother symbols. The mountains as breast symbols and the springs as milk which issues from the breast. Incidentally the prescribed offering to the Muses was milk and honey. Moreover, it should not be supposed that because this myth is very old that later poets used it unmeaningfully. Great poets are always quick to dis-

card hackneyed images which are of no real value. The tenacity with which poets have clung to the myth of the Muses shows that it probably has deep psychological roots.

But while literary tradition is on the one hand indebted to Greece for the intuition that liquids and sounds have something in common, it could also draw on the independent Hebraic tradition of the Bible. In Deuteronomy 32:3 we find, "My words shall drop as rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." In Proverbs we hear that, "The law of the wise is a fountain of life" and "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." In the first epistle of Peter believers are urged to "desire the sincere milk of the word, as new born babes, that ye may grow thereby." And everyone remembers Jesus' saying that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

From the greatest of medieval epics, we may cite a verse from the *Paradiso* where Dante at the height of his mystic vision of God exclaims about his inability to voice what he sees, "Now shall my speech fall farther short even of what I can remember, than an infant's who still bathes his tongue at the breast."

Turning to English literary tradition we may choose two examples from the poet Spenser: one where he speaks of the language of Chaucer as "A well of English, pure and undefiled"; and the other of a lady who when she spake "Sweet words like dropping honey did she shed". Shakespeare, as might be expected, is rich in such identifications. Jacques in *As You Like It* says, "I can suck melancholy out of a song, as a weazel sucks eggs." From *Cymbeline* we have:

. . . Thither write, my queen,
And with mine eyes I'll drink the words you send,
Though the ink be made of gall.

A few other examples at random:

. . . Hie thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear, . . .
My ears have not yet drunk a hundred words

Of that tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound.

Give me some music, music, moody food
Of us that trade in love.

Ben Jonson in a poem entitled "A Fit of Rhyme Against Rhyme" employs allusions to the classical myth to show that poetry dries up if bound too strictly by rhyme.

Pegasus did fly away,
At the wells no Muse did stay,
But bewailed
So to see the fountain dry,
And Apollo's music die. . .

John Donne, the master of the metaphysical conceit, has a typically far-fetched example in which the speaking liquid is blood.

. . . Her pure, and eloquent blood
Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought
That one might almost say, her body thought . . .

Robert Herrick seems to have realized, as have many poets, that poetry and drinking go together. In a poem entitled "When He Would Have his Verses Read", he says:

In sober mornings do not thou rehearse
The holy incantation of a verse;
But when that men have both well drunk and fed,
Let my enchantments then be sung or read.

Thomas Carew, another seventeenth century poet, expresses the point fancifully in a poem on the translation of the Psalms.

Here humbly at the porch she stays,
And with glad ears sucks in thy sacred lays.

John Milton in his sonnet on Shakespeare unites the breast symbol of a "star-pointing pyramid" with a phrase on the way Shakespeare's easy numbers flow. His Lycidas begins with an invocation to the Muses as "sisters of the sacred well" and with an allusion to Virgil by way of mentioning the river near which he was born:

O Fountain Arethuse, and thou honored flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds.

In *Paradise Lost* the Muses are again invoked under the name of Urania who may choose that Aonian mount,

. . . Or if Sion Hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed

Fast by the oracle of God. . . .
 . . . thou from the first
 Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
 Dove-like satst brooding on the vast abyss
 And mad'st it pregnant . . .

Finally we may note Milton's famous definition from *Areopagitica*, "A good book is the precious life blood of a master spirit embalmed and treasured up unto a life beyond life." One might compare with this Henry Vaughn's poem on "Books".

Bright books! . . .
 The track of fled souls, and their Milky way . . .
 By sucking you, the wise—like bees—do grow
 Healing and rich, . . .

One other seventeenth century poet has two interesting quotations worth noting. He is Richard Crashaw.

Eyes are vocal, tears have tongues,
 And there be words not made with lungs;
 Sententious showers, O let them fall,

Their cadence is rhetorical.
 Her breast, the sugar'd nest
 Of her delicious soul, that there does lie,
 Bathing in streams of liquid melody.

When we turn to the Neo-classical age we might expect that such fancifulness would no longer appear in poetry. But this is not the case. One of the initiator's of the Neo-classical style, John Denham, has this to say:

Sure there are poets which did never dream
 Upon Parnassus, nor did taste the stream
 Of Helicon; we therefore may suppose
 These made not poets, but the poets those . . .
 O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
 My great example, as it is my theme!
 Though deep, yet clear, though gentle, yet not dull,
 Strong without rage, without o'er-flowing full.

And Abraham Cowley in speaking of Pindar sings of his:
 . . . unnavigable song,

Like a swollen flood from some steep mountain, pours along;
 The ocean meets with such a voice
 From his enlarged mouth as drowns the ocean's noise.
 So Pindar does new words and figures roll
 Down his impetuous dithyrambic tide,

Which in no channel deigns to abide,
Which neither banks nor dikes control.

John Dryden in a Prologue to Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* makes him say:

And if I drain'd no Greek or Latin store,
'Twas that my own abundance gave me more.

And in another Prologue he has this to say:

Weak stomachs, with a long disease oppress,
Cannot the cordials of strong wit digest;
Therefore thin nourishment of farce ye choose,
Decoctions of a barley water Muse:
A meal of tragedy would make ye sick,
Unless it were a very tender chick.

Jonathon Swift's *Tale of a Tub* discusses among other things that sort of madness which makes people write books and of it he has this to say:

Whosoever pleases to look into the fountains of enthusiasm, from whence, in all ages, have eternally proceeded such fattening streams, will find the spring-head to have been as troubled and muddy as the current; of such great emolument is a tincture of this vapour, which the world calls madness, that without its help the world would not only be deprived of those two great blessings, conquests and systems, but even all mankind would be unhappily reduced to the same belief in things invisible.

Another eighteenth century prose master, William Law, tells us that, "Reading and meditation is that to our souls, which food and nourishment is to our bodies, and becomes a part of us in the same manner." More directly still he says, "You will ask, perhaps, if the sin of reading plays be like the sin of drunkenness. I answer, very like it." To conclude our quotations from the Neo-classical age we may note the famous:

A little learning is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring;
There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain,
And drinking largely sobers us again.

Significantly, Pope follows this passage with a fine simile of how the artist struggles through the mountainous difficulties of his art—again the use of mountains as breast symbols. Pope also tells us about Virgil's first attempts at writing:

Perhaps he seemed above the critic's law,
And but from Nature's fountains scorned to draw.

This phrase reminds us of a famous line from Goethe's *Faust*.

Among the romantic poets the examples are even more numerous. Coleridge, who stands at the beginning of the movement, wrote two poems in which the compulsive giving or denying of words is associated with thirst. They are the "Ancient Mariner" and the fragment "Kubla Khan". From the latter we may quote a passage in which the poet is speaking of himself.

. . . Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of paradise.

The pleasure dome of Kubla Khan in this poem is obviously a breast symbol, and in a similar manner Coleridge's other great poem, "Christabel", the sight of Geraldine's deformed breast makes Christabel lose her power of speech. Coleridge also gives an amusing autobiographical recollection in which his schoolmaster is supposed to have exclaimed: "Harp! Harp? Lyre? Pen and ink, boy, you mean! Muse, boy, Muse? Your Nurse's daughter, you mean! Pierian spring! Oh aye! the cloister pump, I suppose!" This debunking of the classical myth reminds one of Dr. Johnson's remark on a certain poet: "We shall have to wait and see whether he is a fountain or a cistern." Coleridge's famous theory of the imagination also testifies to the unconscious identification of sounds-liquids. He consistently used the terms "fusing", "dissolving" power to indicate that the imagination liquifies words and thus renders them true poetry. Similarly the poet Wordsworth spoke of poetry as the spontaneous overflow of powerful emotions and in his long poem *The Prelude* he says the imagination:

That awful Power rose from the mind's abyss . . .
. . . like the mighty flood of Nile
Poured from his fount of Abyssinian clouds
To fertilize the whole Egyptian plain.

Wordsworth also calls attention to the power which rivers exercised over his youthful poetic faculties.

. . . How often in the course
Of those glad respites . . . have I lain
Down by thy side, O Derwent! murmuring stream,
On the hot stones, and in the glaring sun,
And there have read, devouring as I read,
Defrauding the day's glory, desperate!

. . . Was it for this
That one, the fairest of all rivers, loved
To blend his murmurs with my nurse's song,
And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,
And from his fords and shallows, sent a voice
That flowed along my dreams.

Byron, as might be expected, is a good deal more daring in his choice of liquids with which to identify thoughts and words. In his comic epic *Don Juan* we find him exclaiming on,

. . . thought, which—as a whelp
Clings to its teat—sticks to me through the abyss
Of this odd labyrinth, or as a kelp
Holds by the rock; or as a lover's kiss
Drains its first draught of lips . . .

Or again he is discussing various hindrances to poetic inspiration. One of these is doubt.

Oh Doubt! . . . thou sole prism
Of the truth's rays, spoil not my draught of spirit!
Heaven's brandy, though our brain can hardly bear it.
For ever and anon comes Indigestion
(Not the most 'dainty Ariel'), and perplexes
Our soarings with another sort of question.

John Keats, on the other hand, is more classical but no less sincere in the metaphors with which he expresses the identification. In an autobiographical passage from his poem "Sleep and Poetry" he says:

O for ten years, that I may overwhelm
Myself in poesy;
Then will I pass the countries that I see
In long perspective, and continually
Taste their pure fountains.

And from his *Endymion* we have a similar phraseology where he speaks of :

All lovely tales that we have heard or read:

An endless fountain of immortal drink,
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

In "A Song of Opposites" we have one of his many allusions to the Greek myth of the Muses.

Muses bright, and Muses pale,
Bare your faces of the veil;
Let me see; and let me write
Of the day and of the night—
Both together:—let me slake
All my thirst for sweet heart-ache.

Shelley also has many images involving the identification of sounds-liquid. His famous poem "To the Skylark" is full of them and the skylark, be it remembered, is a type of the poet. The tragic poet of his "Alastor" finds that:

The fountains of divine philosophy
Fled not his thirsting lips . . .

And in one of his finest lyrics he has this to say:

Let me drink of the spirit of that sweet sound,
More, oh, more,—I am thirsting yet;
It loosens the serpent which care has bound
Upon my heart to stifle it;
The dissolving strain through every vein
Passes into my heart and brain.

Finally from the Romantics we may quote the poet Landor's lines from a poem entitled "Chrysolites and Rubies".

Bring me, in cool alcove, the grape uncrushed,
The peach of pulpy cheek and down mature,—
Where every voice (but bird's or child's) is hushed,
And every thought, like the brook nigh, runs pure.

The Victorian poets and writers are fertile in examples. Carlyle, in his essay on the Hero as Poet, speaks of the unconscious sources of poetry in terms which are essentially a symbolic representation of the breast complex.

Such a man's works, whatsoever he with utmost conscious exertion and forethought shall accomplish, grow up withal unconsciously, from the unknown deeps in him;—as the oak-tree grows from the Earth's bosom, as the mountains and waters shape themselves; with a symmetry grounded on Nature's own laws, conformable to all Truth whatsoever. How much in Shakespeare lies hid; his sorrows, his silent struggles known to himself; much that was not known at all, not speakable at all; like roots, like sap and forces working underground!

In Emerson's poem "Bacchus" he tells us:

Bring me wine . . .
Wine which Music is,—
Music and wine are one,—
That I, drinking this,
Shall hear far Chaos talk with me.

Tennyson's enigmatic poem "The Voice of the Peak" is perhaps best understood in terms of a breast symbol. One of the stanzas suggesting the identification liquid-sound is as follows:

The deep has power on the height,
And the height has power on the deep
They are raised for ever and ever,
And sink again into sleep.

In his poem "Locksley Hall" he speaks more explicitly:

Mother-Age—for mine I knew not—help me as when life begun;
Rift the hills, and roll the waters, flash the lightnings, weigh the sun.
O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set.
Ancient founts of inspiration well through all my fancy yet.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poem "A Musical Instrument" which tells the story of how the Greek god Pan invented a pipe from reeds taken from the river bank is also based on the sounds-liquid identification. And in her husband, Robert Browning's poem entitled "Rudel to the Lady" we find:

. . . Say men feed
On songs I sing, and therefore bask they
On my flower's breast as on a platform broad.

And from his "Grammarien's Funeral": as the pall bearers ascend the mountain bearing the grammarian to his tomb they say of him:

Not a whit troubled,
Back to his studies fresher than at first,
Fierce as a dragon
He (soul hydroptic with a sacred thirst)
Sucked at the flagon.

The critic Matthew Arnold gave considerable weight to what he called the fluid movement and liquid diction of poets such as Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Keats, and Chaucer. In his poem on Shakespeare he compares the poet to a mountain whose base lies in the sea—perhaps a breast symbol again. And in his "Song of Callicles" he says:

Through the black, rushing smoke-bursts,
 Thick breaks the red flame.
 All Etna heaves fiercely
 Her forest clothed frame.
 Not here, O Apollo!
 Are haunts meet for thee.
 But, where Helicon breaks down
 In cliffs to the sea.

The poet-novelist, George Meredith, in his poem "The Lark Ascending" is perhaps echoing Shelley, but nevertheless original.

Was never voice of ours could say
 Our inmost in the sweetest way,
 Like yonder voice aloft, and link
 All hearers in the song they drink.

Rossetti's strange poem "The Stream's Secret" is also based on the identification. It begins:

What thing unto mine ear
 Wouldest thou convey—what secret thing
 O wandering water ever whispering?
 Surely thy speech shall be of her;
 Thou water, O thou whispering wanderer,
 What message dost thou bring.

The Irish poet, James C. Mangan, in a poem entitled "The Nameless One" begins:

Roll forth, my song, like the rushing river
 That sweeps along to the mighty sea;
 God will inspire me while I deliver
 My soul of thee!

And finally Francis Thompson unites the two traditions in the lines from his poem "To a Poet Breaking Silence".

From Moses and the Muses draw
 The tables of thy double Law!
 His rod-born fount and Castaly
 Let the one rock bring forth for thee,
 Renewing so from either spring
 The songs which both thy countries sing:

Twentieth century poets in spite of their rejection of much traditional imagery have not been able to escape allusions to the liquids-sounds identification. Robert Bridges' poem entitled "Nightingales" is a significant use of it.

Beautiful must be the mountains whence ye come,

And bright in the fruitful valleys the streams, wherefrom
Ye learn your song. . . .

Nay, barren are those mountains and spent the streams
Our song is the voice of desire, that haunts our dreams
A throe of the heart,

There is a similar imagery in T. S. Eliot's poem "Ash Wednesday":

Who then made strong the fountains and made fresh the springs.
. . . . restoring
With new verse the ancient rhyme
But the fountain sprang up and the bird sang down
Redeem the time, redeem the dream
The token of the word unheard, unspoken
Till the wind shake a thousand whispers from the yew.

William Butler Yeats has several enigmatic little poems which are understandable in terms of some of the quotations we have already cited. One is called "Spilt Milk".

We that have done and thought,
That have thought and done,
Must ramble, and thin out
Like milk spilt on a stone.

Another which, of course, refers primarily to poets as the preceding poem did is entitled "The Empty Cup".

A crazy man that found a cup,
When all but dead of thirst,
Hardly dared to wet his mouth
Imagining, moon-accursed,
That another mouthful
And his beating heart would burst.
October last I found it too
But found it dry as bone,
And for that reason am I crazed
And my sleep is gone.

W. H. Auden in his poem "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" says:

With the farming of a verse
Make a vineyard of the curse,
Sing of human unsuccess
In a rapture of distress.
In the deserts of the heart
Let the healing fountain start,
In the prison of his days
Teach the free man how to praise.

So, too, the American poet Robinson Jeffers in his poem entitled "Cassandra".

. . . does it matter, Cassandra,
Whether the people believe
Your bitter fountain?

It may also be of interest here to quote some sentences from the poet A. E. Housman's lecture on "The Name and Nature of Poetry". In the first sentence Housman is defining poetry and in the second giving his subjective impression of its origin.

I should call it a secretion; whether a natural secretion, like turpentine in the fir, or a morbid secretion, like the pearl in the oyster.

Having drunk a pint of beer at luncheon— . . . there would flow into my mind, with sudden and unaccountable emotion, sometimes a line or two of verse . . . then the spring would bubble again. I say bubble up, because, so far as I could make out, the source of the suggestions thus proffered to the brain was an abyss which I have already had occasion to mention, the pit of the stomach.

A passage from Herbert Gorman's biography of the great modern novelist James Joyce is equally amusing and equally sincere and revealing. It concerns Joyce's choice of a title for his first volume of poems.

One of his bouncing companions, a sharp-witted intelligent zany, often sought solace (to put it delicately) in the generous charms of a hot-blooded widow and to this widow's home one evening went Joyce, companion, poems, and several bottles of beer. After a time necessity (that knows no master) urged the widow to rise and retire precipitately behind a screen that was in the room. An instant later there sounded a brave and unabashed tinkle from the hidden corner. Joyce's companion shouted with joy. "By God!" he cried, "she's a critic! You hear how she appreciates your poems?" "Critic or no", replied Joyce gravely, "she has given me a title for my book. I shall call it **Chamber Music.**"

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NOTES

- 1) See his contribution to **Psychoanalysis and the Social Sciences** edited by Geza Roheim, 1947.

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